

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 INR-07 L-03 ACDA-05

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 USNATO 5655

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, NATO, MNUC, NPG

SUBJ: NPG-OCTOBER 15 PERMREPS MEETING

REF: USNATO 5555 DTG 102025Z OCT 75

SUMMARY: AT OCTOBER 15 MEETING, NPG PERMREPS DISCUSSED VENUE FOR FALL NPG MINISTERIAL MEETINGS. GERMANY CONFIRMED ITS SUPPORT FOR HOLDING FALL MEETINGS AT NATO HQS, BUT SEPARATE IN TIME FROM THE DPC/NAC. BELGIUM, CANADA, DENMARK AND ITALY EXPRESSED WILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT THIS SUGGESTION IF MAJORITY FAVORED BY IT, BUT EVINCED NO ENTHUSIASM FOR IT. NETHERLANDS AND ORWAY FAVORED MAINTAINING CURRENT PATTERN OF NPG MEETINGS. ALL THESE ALLIES URGED KEEPING NPG MEETINGS SEPARATE FROM THE DPC/NAC. CLEAR SENTIMENT OF THE MEETING WAS IN THE DIRECTION OF PRESERVING THE STATUS QUO. NPG PERMREPS WILL DISCUSS THIS SUBJECT AGAIN ON OCT 29. END SUMMARY.

1. SYG LUNS SAID THAT HE HAD CALLED THE MEETING OF NPG PERMREPS AT THE REQUEST OF THE GERMAN AMBASSADOR TO DISCUSS THE QUESTION OF VENUE FOR FALL CONFIDENTIAL

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NPG MINISTERIAL MEETINGS. HE NOTED MOD LEBER'S ORIGINAL PROPOSAL AT THE MONTEREY NPG MEETING TO HOLD THE FALL MEETINGS OF THE NPG IN DECEMBER AT NATO HEADQUARTERS IN CONJUUNCTION WITH THE DPC. HE ALSO NOTED A RECENTLY

SUGGESTED ALTERNATIVE OF HOLDING THE FALL NPG MEETINGS AT NATO HEADQUARTERS, BUT SEPARATE IN TIME FROM THE DPC. LUNS REVIEWED VARIOUS ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF THE ABOVE PROPOSALS, IN PARTICULAR COST IMPLICATIONS, TRAVEL REQUIREMENTS, VISIBILITY OF THE NPG AND POSSIBLE PROBLEMS OF INCLUDING SEVERAL MAJOR MINISTERIAL MEETINGS DURING A SINGLE SHORT TIME PERIOD. HE THEN ASKED FOR COMMENTS.

2. KRAPF (FRG) SAID HE WISHED TO REVIEW A FEW OF THE BASIC THOUGHTS WHICH MINISTER LEBER HAD IN MIND WHEN HE MADE HIS ORIGINAL PROPOSAL. HE SAID LEBER WANTED TO MAINTAIN THE SPECIAL CHARACTER OF THE NPG, BUT WAS INTERESTED IN POSSIBILITIES OF LESSENING THE COST OF NPG MINISTERIAL MEETINGS. HE SAID LEBER HAD HAD SECOND THOUGHTS ON THE ORIGINAL PROPOSAL TO COMBINE THE NPG WITH THE DPC/NAC, AND NOW FAVORED THE SUGGESTION OF HOLDING FALL NPG MEETINGS AT NATO HEADQUARTERS, BUT SEPARATE FROM THE DPC/NAC. HE SAID, HOWEVER, THAT GERMANY DID NOT WANT TO IMPOSE ANY SPECIAL BURDEN ON BELGIUM.

3. HARTOGH (NETHERLANDS) SAID HIS AUTHORITIES FAVORED MAINTAINING THE CURRENT PATTERN OF NPG MEETINGS, AND THAT THEY BELIEVED THAT THE NPG SHOULD HAVE A SPECIAL CHARACTER AND ATMOSPHERE WHICH WOULD BE LOST WITH MEETINGS AT NATO HEADQUARTERS. HE SAID THAT NPG MEETINGS ARE LIKE SYMPOSIA, NOT MEETINGS FOR DECISION-MAKING, AND THAT THE QUALITY OF THE EXCHANGES, AS WELL AS INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS WHICH TAKE PLACE ON THE FRINGES, WOULD BE LESSENED UNDER THE PROPOSED CHANGE. HARTOGH NOTED THAT WHILE MEETINGS AT NATO HQS WOULD BE LESS EXPENSIVE, HIS AUTHORITIES DID NOT BELIEVE THAT THE COST OF HOSTING A MINISTERIAL MEETING ON THE AVERAGE OF ONCE EVERY FIVE YEARS COMPRISED MUCH OF A FINANCIAL BURDEN.

4. SYG LUNS INTERJECTED BY NOTING THAT A DISADVANTAGE OF MEETINGS AT NATO HEADQUARTERS IS THE LACK OF OPPORTUNITY FOR HOST COUNTRIES TO PROVIDE TOURS OF IMPORTANT INSTALLATIONS AND FACILITIES. HE SAID THAT HE AND OTHERS
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WERE ENORMOUSLY IMPRESSED BY THE TOUR TO VANDENBERG AFB LAST JUNE.

5. BUSCH (NORWAY) SAID HIS AUTHORITIES SHARED THE DUTCH VIEWS AND THAT THEY DID NOT WANT TO LOSE THE SPECIAL CHARACTER OF NPG MEETINGS. HE NOTED THAT ONE REASON FOR ESTABLISHING THE NPG WAS TO PROVIDE INFORMAL SURROUNDINGS THAT FOSTER FRANK AND DIRECT DISCUSSIONS BY MINISTERS, AND THAT MEETING HOSTED BY NPG COUNTRIES CONTRIBUTED TO THIS. HE SAID THAT PERHAPS IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO SIMPLIFY MEETINGS AWAY FROM NATO IN ORDER TO REDUCE HOST COUNTRY COSTS. HE SAID THAT HIS AUTHORITIES DID NOT WANT NPG MEETINGS TO BE HELD IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE DPC,

AND BELIEVED THAT SUCH MEETINGS COULD BE SEPARATED IN TIME BY EVEN MORE THAN THE USUAL THREE TO FOUR WEEKS.

6. DE STAERCKE (BELGIUM) SAID HIS AUTHORITIES WOULD ACCEPT ANYTHING, INCLUDING LEBER'S REVISED PROPOSAL OF MEETINGS AT NATO HEADQUARTERS SEPARATE FROM THE DPC/NAC. HOWEVER, HE SAID THERE WERE DIFFICULTIES. HE ASKED WHAT THE TERM "NO HOST" MEANT. HE SAID THERE WERE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN "NO HOST" AND "NO COST" MEETINGS. AND THOUGHT THAT IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO HAVE A "NO COST" MEETING. HE SAID HE THOUGHT THAT IT WOULD BE STRANGE FOR THE BELGIAN DEFMIN, WHEN BELGIUM WAS ROTATED OF NPG, NOT TO BE PRESENT AT NPG MEETINGS IN BRUSSELS. HE SAID THAT FOR THE "PRI-VILEGED" PERMANENT MEMBERS THIS WAS NOT A PROBLEM, BUT IT WAS NOT THE SAME FOR ROTATING MEMBERS. HAVING NOTED THESE CONCERNS, HE SAID THAT HIS MINISTER WOULD GO ALONG WITH THE MAJORITY.

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7. LUNS SAID THE VISIBILITY OF NPG MEETINGS IN HOST COUNTRIES STRENGTHENED SUPPORT FOR ALLIED POLICY OF DE STAERCKE COMMENTED THAT HE WAS STRUCK BY THE FACT THAT, UNDER THE GERMAN PROPOSAL, COUNTRIES WOULD HOST NPG MEETING ONLY ONCE EVERY ELEVEN YEARS. HE THOUGHT THAT THIS WAS TOO LITTLE VISIBILITY.

8. MENZIES (CANADA) SAID THAT HE KNEW THAT CANADIAN DEFMIN APPRECIATED THE INTIMATE SPIRIT OF NPG MEETINGS. HE SAID HE HOPED THAT THIS SPIRIT WOULD BE PRESERVED IN WHATEVER ARRANGEMENT THAT WAS AGREED. HE SAID HE SAW VALUE IN MEETING IN CAPITALS, PARTICULARLY FOR OPPORTUNITY OF HOST COUNTRIES TO PROVIDE THEIR VIEWS ON NUCLEAR AND OTHER ISSUES. HE SAID THAT IF FALL MEETINGS WERE TO TAKE PLACE AT NATO HQS, HIS AUTHORITIES PRE-

FERRED THAT THEY BE SEPARATE FROM THE DPC/NAC. HE NOTED THE BURDEN THAT WOULD BE PLACED ON CHIEFS OF STAFF, AMONG OTHERS, BY COMBINING NPG MEETINGS WITH OTHER HIGH LEVEL MEETINGS THAT TAKE PLACE IN DECEMBER. MENZIES ALSO SUGGESTED THAT IT MIGHT BE USEFUL TO SCHEDULE FALL NPG MEETINGS DURING THE PERIOD OF ANNUAL AUTUMN MANEUVERS SO THAT MINISTERS OR CHIEFS OF STAFF MIGHT HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO OBSERVE SUCH EXERCISES.

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9. FERRETTI (ITALY) SAID HE APPRECIATED THE ARGUMENTS OF THE NETHERLANDS, NORWAY AND BELIGUM. HE SAID THAT IF THE MAJORITY FAVORED THE GERMAN PROPOSAL, HIS AUTHORITIES WOULD NOT OBJECT. HE SAID, HOWEVER, THAT THEY BELIEVED THAT FALL NPG MEETINGS AT NATO HEADQUARTERS SHOULD BE SEPARATE FROM THE DPC/NAC MEETINGS, AND BY AS MUCH AS TWO MONTHS.

10. SVART (DENMARK) SAID HIS AUTHORITIES COULD GO ALONG WITH THE MAJORITY BUT WOULD JOIN OTHERS IN FAVORING THE SEPARATION OF NPG AND DPC/NAC MEETINGS. HE QUESTIONED OURS' OBSERVATION THAT THE POSSIBLE VISIBILITY OF NPG MEETINGS IN HOST COUNTRIES HAD MUCH BEARING ON DETERRENCE. SYG LUNS RESPONDED BY SAYING THAT PERHAPS SVART WAS RIGHT, BUT THOUGHT THAT NATO PUBLICS BECAME MORE AWARE OF THE NPG THROUGH ITS MEETINGS. HE SAID THAT HE HAD GAINED THE IMPRESSION ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS THAT THE US AND EUROPEAN PUBLIC, UPON BECOMING FAMILIAR WITH THE NPG, WAS IMPRESSED BY THE FACT THAT ALLIANCE NUCLEAR DEFENSE WAS NOT JUST THE BUSINESS OF THE US AND UK, BUT ALSO ACTIVELY INVOLVED THE OTHER ALLIES.

11. US CHARGE SAID THAT HE DID NOT HAVE INSTRUCTIONS AND RESERVED THE US POSITION.

12. SYG LUNS SUMMED UP THAT THE INITIAL FAVORABLE REACTIONS TO LEBER'S ORIGINAL PROPOSAL AT MONTEREY HAD COOLED SIGNIFICANTLY. HE NOTED THAT THERE WAS A CLEAR PREFERENCE TO KEEP THE NPG SEPARATE FROM THE DPC/NAC. HE SAID THAT NPG PERMREPS WOULD HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO RETURN TO THIS SUBJECT AT THEIR NEXT MEETING ON OCT 29.

14. COMMENT: SINCE THERE APPEARS TO BE VITALLY NO SUPPORT FOR HOLDING MEETINGS AT NATO HQS IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE DPC/NAC, WE QUESTION WHETHER THERE IS A NET ADVANTAGE IN HOLDING FALL NPG MEETINGS AT NATO HEADQUARTERS INSTEAD OF IN HOST COUNTRIES.
END COMMENT. STREATOR

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